

of truth, that you may prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.

*Ivelcheſter the 12 day of the
1 Moneth, 1658.*

T. S.

A Lamentation taken up for the Churches of the Anabaptists by John Collens with a call, and warning for them to come out of the self separation, into the footsteps of the flock, and to turn from the darkness to the true light.

FRiends, you who call your selves Churches of Christ Jesus, who have separated your selves not having the spirit to lead, and separate you from your uncleannes, and so are in the self separation, out of the power of God, which power maketh man willing to deny himself and take up the daily cross which crucifieth him to the world, and the world to him, where sin is nailed, and the power of God received, to resist the Devil, which leads them captive at his will, who live in sin and transgression, which is the work of the Devil, and all them that are led by him have not received the faith, which giveth victory over him, nor have not believed the Gospel, which is the power of God to salvation, nor received Christ Jesus, to save them from their sins which all they that do believe, do receive even power to become the sons of God, and joynt heirs with Christ.

Friends, in the Name and fear of the Lord God Almighty, do I warn you, and in bowels of love and tenderness do in Christs stead beseech you, that in the light of Christ Jesus made manifest, which never changeth, but bears true testimony for God, try and consider, whether whilst you live in sin, you are not servants to sin, and doth the work of the Devil: and the wages of sin is death, and he that soweth to the flesh must of the flesh reap corruption, and he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting, you cannot serve two masters, neither can you serve God and Mammon, verily verily except you be born again you cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, and he that is born of God cannot sin, for his seed remaineth in him, he that sinneth is of the Devil; now friends in the coolness and moderation consider,

whether you know this birth brought forth in you which cannot commit sin, the seed immortal begotten of God, which enters the Kingdom of God; and try your selves how you stand in the presence of the Lord; in singleness of heart, and deceive not your selves with words; *for the gospel is not in word but in power*; a profession of God and Christ will not save you whilst you deny the power of God, by which sin is crucified, *for whosoever committeth sin is under the Law*: and he was made manifest to take away our sins, truly a lamentation is taken up for you, *how are you fallen, how are your garments defiled*; how are you degenerated and fallen back to the love of the world with its customes, fashions and traditions, with the lusts and vanities thereof, renewing again those idolatries which formerly you have destroyed, how is your leader and great Apostle amongst you, *Thomas Collier*, become an enemy of righteousness *resisting the holy Ghost*: and *perverting the right way of God* preaching up sin and imperfection for term of life, going about with all the strength he can muster up to establish the kingdom of the Devil in the Church of Christ, raking up the failings of the Saints recorded, to confirm the reign of the man of sin for ever, condemning the generation of the just, bringing in new distinctions to make the body of Christ an imperfect sinful body, how doth he blaspheme God & his tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven, *who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect*, how doth he slander, reproach and falsely accuse the innocent and harmless Lambs of Christ Jesus, yea the Lord is witness between him & us, *and we call Heaven and earth to witness against him this day*, that these things * asserted by him as our principles never entered into our hearts, our consciences bearing us witness in the sight of God, though he like a whore hath wiped his mouth at a looking glass, in which the children of light see much more of his deformity and wickedness; having perverted the words in several books as he doth *the Scriptures to his own destruction*, and out of his mischievous heart, hath wrested their honest intents, and taken pieces of sentences and raised it up alie (out of his own wicked heart) upon them, and then overturned his own work, but that which

* In his book called a dialogue between a minister and a Christian.

which is written in those books remaineth untouched by him, his own lies being but wiped from them, as any who are without prejudice may easily see, reading over the things contained in those books who will sufficiently clear themselves, but the Devil *who was a lyer from the beginning, is now cast out of heaven into the earth, and he hath great wrath with the woman, and the remnant of her seed who keep the word of God and testimony of Jesus; but the arm of the Lord is stretched out over us, and in his fear are we preserved from the rage of our enemies, yea a pillar of fire to give us light goeth before us, which is a cloud and darkness to our Egyptian like enemies that follow after us:*

Truly my soul pitties you, and my bowels hath even yerned on you, for many dayes; oh that you had an ear that you could hear, and an heart that you could understand: you have played the harlot and are departed from God, and you have joyned your selves to another besides the Lord, *you have run a whoreing after your own Inventions, and you have worshipped the works of your hands, and your Pastours hath deceived you, for the Lord doth not smile upon you, but his jealousy burneth against you as a fire, yet return and he may have mercy, and whilst the Spirit of the Lord strives, answer with obedience; for he hath said his spirit shall not alwayes strive with man, and while you have the light, believe in the light, and bring all your deeds unto the light that they may be proved and tried, whether they be wrought in God.*

And now friends in the fear of the Lord deal honestly with your own selves, and let us reason together, and in the light of Christ Jesus weigh and try all things, and see with the light (which will deal plainly with you) whether you are indeed such as you profess your selves; and whether the ordinances you so much talk of be indeed the ordinances of Christ, or but shadowes, whether water baptism or *the baptism of the spirit be the baptism of Christ, since there is but one baptism, whether you have heard the voice of Christ or seen his shape at any time, that hath commanded you in the particular to take up those ordinances, or a perswasion in your own minds from the letter when as the letter killeth, or whether such a thing as water be commanded in the letter, or your own Imaginations from the letter.*

Whether the bread you break be the body of Christ, or the cup you drink be his blood, since it doth not cleanse you from sin? whether the prayers you make be in the spirit, and you can say in the presence of the Lord, you lift up holy hands; have them that teach among you the spirit of infallibility, and revelation of the mind of Christ, or they speak a deviation of their own brain, and hath not received the word of the Lord from his mouth, but boast in anothers line, and what themselves have invented, and whether this be the spirit of God, or the spirit of error which is not of God; and whether the Covenant, and ordinances which doth not make the commers thereunto perfect, be not that which is to be done away as weake and unprofitable? whether your faith and preaching be not also vain, forasmuch as you believe you shall never overcome sin while you live, and your faith doth not purifie your hearts, and since that as a tree falleth so it lyeth, and as death leaves you judgment finds you, and that there is no repentance in the grave whether you must goe, and that nothing that is unclean, or that worketh abomination, or that maketh a lye shall ever enter the City of our God.

Therefore once more in the name of the Lord I warn you, come out from among them, all ye that are tender-hearted, and that desires salvation to your soules *come out from among them, and be ye seperate, and touch no unclean thing. and I will receive you saith the Lord,* for whosoever cannot witnesse Christ Jesus a Saviour from sin in the particular, shall never witnesse him a Saviour from condemnation, & refuse not to walk with a pure perfect people, as *T.C.* saith we be, and follow us no farther then as we follow Christ, for we have the mind of Christ; therefore own the light which convinceth you of sin, for as living witnesses for the name of our God do we stand, that the light which convinceth of sin is the true light that leadeth out of sin, all them that walks in the light, as he is in the light, they witnesse the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin, which joyns us to Christ as members of his body, whereby we receive the spirit of the Father, to lead and guide us to do his will, which is our sanctification, which spirit revealeth the Son, Christ Jesus the light, who worketh all our works in us, and for us, whose

whose work is perfect, for we are no more our own, but bought with a price; so are we baptized by one spirit into one body, and made conformable to his death, who hath raised us to life, glory be to his name for ever: here is the Church in God the Father, where the true Church, Ordinances and fellowship is known, and the true worship in spirit and in truth (in which onely the father is worshipped) lived in; yea, and we bear testimony according to the Scriptures, that there is no other name given under heaven by which men can be saved, but by Christ Jesus, who is revealed in us, our hope of glory; this is he that hath told us all that ever we have done: is not this the very Christ, who was in the beginning with God, whose day *Abraham* saw, whom the professing Jews (when made manifest) who had the Scriptures of the Prophets (who prophesied of him) read every Sabbath day, yet their voices they knew not, but crucified the Lord of Life, and put him to open shame, as it is at this day; *Him hath God raised, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow*; this is he whom we bear testimony to, *Christ Jesus the same yesterday, to day and for ever*; therefore take heed least ye be found fighters against God, and no longer believe lyes, but cast out the lyar from amongst you, for the lyar is of the Devil, and whilst you join with him, you are one with him, and must partake of his plagues. Therefore hear and fear before the Lord, for the *Lord will rain snares upon the wicked, and pour out shame and contempt upon his adversaries*; and go on speedily with your promise which you have promised the Lord in your Epistle, *That you will cast out sin or sinners out of the house of God*, so may the Lord have a Church free from sin upon the earth, for he is come whose right it is, and the Kingdom and the Government shall be his, who will rule the Heathen with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a Potters vessel. And now have I eased my spirit, and cleared my conscience towards you, whether you will hear or forbear, and the Lord will be clear of you, when he cometh in ten thousands of his Saints to execute the judgements written; *this honour hath all the saints.*

From

From him who was once owned as a Brother amongst you, and since owned a brother by you, whilst walking in the vanity of my mind running to the same excess of riot with you; but since the Lord in mercy visited me, and called me out of darkness, into his marvellous light, I have been hated and despightfully used by some of you, who am known to many of you by the name of,

I. C.

FINIS.
